

**PENNS VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 16, 2018**

**PRESENT:**

**Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission**

Centre Hall	Chris Cooper
Gregg Township	Doug Bierly
Haines Township	Charlie Valentine
Miles Township	Ron Hough
Millheim Borough	Lauralee Snyder
Penn Township	Bob Fox and Leroy Young
Potter Township	Ron Grove and Denny Foust for Jake Tanis

**Other:**

Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization	Tom Zilla and Mike Bloom
Centre County Planning and Community Development Office	Linda Marshall

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Valentine called the April 16, 2018 meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

**APPROVAL of MEETING NOTES**

Mr. Valentine called for additions or corrections to the March 19, 2018 meeting notes of the Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission.

Mr. Young pointed out that the discussion on designating a taxpayer's municipality of residence for the collection of a levied local services tax (LST) was not included in the meeting notes. Ms. Marshall explained that additional clarification was needed on the collection of a levied local services tax and that she was waiting to hear back from one of the legislative offices. Those present noted that it was their understanding that the LST may be levied, assessed and collected only by the political subdivision of the taxpayer's place of employment.

Mr. Young moved to approve the March 19, 2018 meeting notes, as written. Mr. Bierly seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Treasurer Report**

Ms. Cooper read the Treasurer's Report. There is a balance of \$195 in the account. Mr. Hough moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, and Mr. Young seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Secretary Report**

No report

**REPORTS:**

**Centre Hall Borough**

Ms. Cooper reported that Council has been working on a Fire Protection Agreement between the Borough and Potter Township.

**Gregg**

Mr. Bierly reported that the Township has exceeded its solicitor's budget for 2018 due to Right to Know requests.

**Haines Township**

Mr. Valentine reported that the Township is holding Conditional Use hearings on the proposed expansion of the Woodward Camp. He noted that the second hearing will be held on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Miles Township**

Mr. Hough did not have anything to report.

**Millheim Borough**

Ms. Snyder reported that the Borough is working on putting out for bid a water line replacement project. She added that the Penns Valley Emergency Medical Services (EMS) has also been on their agenda.

Ms. Snyder informed the Commission that Council heard a presentation on gerrymandering given by representatives from Fair Districts PA. She noted that Council adopted the Fair Districts PA resolution.

**Penn Township**

Messrs. Fox and Young reported that the water line project in Hartertown is still in progress. The contractor is constructing meter pits. It was noted that the project is under budget.

**Potter Township**

Mr. Foust reported that the Township is facing numerous Right to Know requests.

He added that the Township is waiting for the construction phase of the Potters Mills Gap project to begin.

Mr. Foust also noted that Mr. Dick Decker, Supervisor, is working with the residents of the Village of Potters Mills on obtaining right-of-way clearance for the installation of a new septage tank on each property. He added that project construction will begin late summer/fall of 2018.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **-Tri-Municipal Park and Recreation Committee**

Mr. Grove reported that there is now road access to the tower.

Mr. Foust added that the power lines are being laid and that the trenches have been dug.

Ms. Cooper also reported that the Frisbee golf component of the park has been completed.

Mr. Foust stated that the walking paths have been scaled back due to the cost of construction.

### **-Penns Valley EMS Discussion**

Ms. Marshall stated that the only update that she had received is that the municipal agreement for providing funds to the EMS has been drafted and forwarded to the municipalities for consideration. She added that the only provision in the agreement that she is aware of is that each municipal would contribute an equivalent of 0.5 mills to the EMS or 2018.

Ms. Marshall asked the Commission if the draft agreement includes the formation of a regional committee.

Mr. Fox replied that the only other provision in the agreement is that it needs to be reviewed annually.

It was noted that all of the region's municipalities have signed the agreement except for Haines and Potter Townships. Both municipalities will consider the agreement at a future meeting.

Mr. Hough asked if the municipalities have received a financial report from the EMS. The representatives indicated that their respective municipalities have received their first report.

Mr. Foust reported that a budget meeting is being held on April 25<sup>th</sup>. He noted that there are three to four municipal representatives working on the budget and hope to have it finalized for adoption in September of 2018.

Mr. Foust talked about the fundraising event recently held by the newly formed Penns Valley EMS Auxiliary. He reported that 1,050 sub sandwiches were sold as well as 1,350 Mr. Stickeys, 300 donuts provided by the Amish, and 8 gallons of soup.

Mr. Bierly stated that the net proceeds for the event were \$7,000 as noted by Ms. Covalt.

A question was raised as to how many membership subscriptions were paid for at the event. Mr. Foust replied that the EMS received four new memberships at the event and that he passed out an additional dozen forms.

Mr. Foust commented that there was a high level of support from the Amish community.

Mr. Hough stated that the Amish community is concerned about their property taxes being raised.

Mr. Valentine asked the representatives if their municipalities are considering different taxing options.

Mr. Fox replied that Penn Township is maxed out at 0.5 mils for property tax.

Mr. Young added that Penn Township is discussing the Local Services Tax. He commented that the LST is meant for EMS, and he stated that he was surprised that the LST is not levied anywhere in the region.

Mr. Bierly stated that if the LST was levied valley wide that it would make a substantial difference.

Mr. Fox stated that Penn Township contacted the Centre Tax Agency about the LST. They learned that the municipality has 29 employers; however, they did not obtain figures on how many employees work full time. He noted that employees earning less than \$12,000 are exempt from paying the LST, as provided for in the PA Tax Code.

Mr. Foust stated that Potter Township has also discussed the LST option.

Mr. Hough informed the Commission that he heard that the EMS can charge \$100 for taking a patient's vitals even though the patient is not transported.

Mr. Fox commented that funding for the EMS is a state-wide problem, and he is disappointed that there are no real solutions to address the critical problem. He expressed a concern about having to pay for emergency services in the future.

Mr. Young stated that he believes that the auxiliary effort is really helping.

Mr. Valentine agreed with Mr. Fox that the EMS and the municipalities need to look outside of the box.

Mr. Fox stated that they need to get the word out about the importance of memberships.

Mr. Young emphasized that the EMS needs to stay on the Commission's agenda.

Mr. Foust stated that it would be helpful to know what the potential revenue might be from levying a Local Services Tax.

Ms. Marshall offered to invite the Centre Region Tax Agency Administrator to the May 21<sup>st</sup> meeting to address the Commission on the Local Services Tax and what is the process for a municipality to levy the tax. She wanted to make sure that it would not cross purposes with the committee that was established by the region's municipalities to address the EMS funding shortage.

The Commission felt that it would be helpful to invite the Centre Tax Administrator to the next meeting and also invite the regional EMS Committee members.

**-Update on the Regional Comprehensive Plan-Demographics**

Ms. Marshall asked for input on the draft chapter, including adding data sets.

She explained the difference between the data compiled using the Decennial Census and the American Community Survey (ACS). Mr. Hough commented that it would be nice to have a more comprehensive survey done for the municipalities.

Mr. Valentine recommended that the chapter be added to the May 21<sup>st</sup> agenda in case the Commission would like to have more time to review the document.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) Update-Tom Zilla and Mike Bloom, Centre County MPO Staff**

Ms. Marshall informed the Commission that Mr. Bloom was promoted to Assistant Director, replacing Sue Hannegan who retired a few months ago. He explained that Mr. Bloom is still working for the Centre County MPO until his replacement is hired.

Mr. Zilla introduced himself and noted that he works out of the Centre Region Planning Agency Office.

Attachment: PowerPoint presentation

Mr. Zilla stated that transportation planning is mandated by federal law for areas exceeding a population of 50,000 and that an MPO must be put in place. The federal law states that the planning program must be Cooperative, Continuous and Comprehensive.

Mr. Zilla added that our MPO is countywide with 18 voting members. Mr. Zilla explained the committees and their members. He informed the Commission that the Penns Valley Region's representative for the Coordinating Committee is Dick Decker, Potter Township, and the Technical Committee representative is Joel Myers, former Gregg Township Supervisor.

Mr. Zilla gave an overview of the projects in Centre County.

In regard to High Impact Locations in Penns Valley, Mr. Zilla pointed out that there are three projects in the region, which are: Potters Mills Gap, paving of US Route 322 and the SR 45 bridge west of the Village of Woodward.

Mr. Zilla stated that Ms. Sue Wenrick, Haines Township Secretary, did a good job coordinating the dissemination of information on the project for the area.

Mr. Zilla showed the map of the detours for the SR 45 bridge project. Pine Creek Road is the car detour during the project construction phase. The truck detour is SR 192 from Lewisburg to Centre Hall. Mr. Zilla added that PennDOT (Department of Transportation) is looking at how best to sign the detours.

Mr. Zilla stated that Walsh, project manager, had direct conversations with the school district about the project. He pointed out that this project is a multi-county effort. He noted that Walsh also had communications with the emergency services providers.

Mr. Valentine asked if there would be additional enforcement in the area. Mr. Zilla replied that enforcement has been discussed with the PA State Police. Mr. Valentine commented that there is a potential to have serious accidents with the detours.

Mr. Valentine wanted to know if the contract has been let for the Woodward bridge since he noted that trees have been cut in the area. Mr. Zilla replied that he was not sure how the contractor is selected for the project. Mr. Bloom indicated that there is a consortium of contractors that they select from.

Mr. Zilla showed a rendering of the Potters Mills Gap (PMG) Section B06 of 322 project.

In regard to the PMG project, Mr. Zilla gave credit to the emergency services providers for the change in alignment configuration for the two lane access road.

Mr. Zilla stated that the PMG Project, Section B06, was let at the end of March 2018 and was tentatively awarded to Hawbaker for a contract amount of \$82.374 million. The project will be completed in October 2020.

Mr. Zilla commented that traffic will be maintained at all times, but there will be delays.

Mr. Zilla pointed out that the area near Cole's Bus Garage will be the first big round-about. He noted that the ramps will be two-way traffic for short distance. He remarked that it will be unique design.

Mr. Zilla addressed the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and noted that in Pennsylvania the program's focus is on highway and bridge projects. The TIP includes four years of projects and is updated every 2 years.

Mr. Zilla stated that the 2019 TIP includes \$70.3 million for Transit and \$55.7 million for Highway/Bridge projects. The only highway project is the PMG, B06. Out of the 32 bridge projects in the County, there are ten in Penns Valley. He referred to Slide 13 on the PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Zilla referred to the Lower Georges Valley bridge and stated that construction will start on March 2019.

Mr. Zilla mentioned the PennDOT Connects Program, which is the infancy of the program in Centre County, whereby, staff works with municipal partners early on, which enables them to learn a lot more about what may be involved with the project moving forward. He stated that the Penn Street bridge in Millheim was one project that has been going through this process.

Mr. Zilla reviewed the schedule for the TIP noted Slide 15. He encouraged everyone to follow the TIP process and provide input. The TIP runs on a Federal Fiscal Year.

Mr. Zilla distributed a card to those present on the DRIV=forward program that was put in place to advocate for two highway projects. One project is the former SCCCTS (South Central Centre County Transportation Study) project, and the other is the I99/I80 interchange project, replacing it with two new interchanges. He said that this is an initiative of the MPO and the CBICC (Chamber of Business and Industry of Centre County). He referred to Slide 17, which includes the mission of DRIV=forward.

Mr. Zilla informed the Commission that the Routes 322/144/45 project entails updating the baseline data, which includes but not limited to crashes, traffic volume, community features, etc. He stated that the intent is to produce an updated Needs Analysis that will determine alignment options.

Mr. Zilla commented that from a funding perspective that it would make sense to eliminate the alternatives that would not make sense.

Mr. Zilla asked the Commission to address any rumors in regard to the return of the SCCCTS project by informing residents that they are not true.

Mr. Zilla stated that there is no requirement that MPO members be elected officials and that they may be citizens.

Ms. Marshall referred to the SR 45 bridge project and asked Mr. Zilla if information will be provided to the community before the project is under construction. Mr. Zilla replied that approximately two weeks before the project begins that Walsh will send out a press release. He hopes that the word will get out to the citizens.

Mr. Valentine asked what the status of the Pine Creek bridge project. Mr. Zilla replied that there have been a lot of soils issues with that project and that it should be completed in the next few weeks.

Ms. Marshall asked if there has been any special outreach to the Amish. Mr. Zilla replied that Sue Wenrick has done a good job in getting the word out.

Mr. Bloom commented that there will most likely be issues with the detour for this bridge project.

Messrs. Fox and Valentine believe that SR 192 is not built for truck traffic.

Mr. Zilla thanked the Commission for their time.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

Mr. Hough reported that he had attended a meeting of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and stated that Commissioner Mark Higgins spoke of a cheese factory interested in siting a facility in Centre County. Mr. Bloom responded to Mr. Hough by stating that very specific site criteria was established by the company and provided to the County by the Governor's Action Team. Finding a location that meets all the criteria has proven difficult, but the Planning Office has developed a list of prospective locations within the county that meet most of the company's preferences.

Mr. Hough informed the Commission that Congressman Thompson is working on getting legislation passed to get whole milk back in the schools. He commented that he thinks that it is sad that the local school district does not use local milk.

### **FOR GOOD OF THE ORDER**

No additional items were brought to the Commission's attention.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, Mr. Hough moved to adjourn the April 16, 2018 meeting of the Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission at 8:50 p.m. Ms. Cooper seconded the motion. The motion carried.